



October 9th, 2015

Victoria Wachino, Director
Center for Medicaid and CHIP Services
Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services
200 Independence Avenue Southwest
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Director Wachino:

On behalf of All Home (formerly the Committee to End Homelessness), I am writing to express our strong support for the Supportive Housing Medicaid benefit proposed in Healthier Washington Initiative's 1115 Medicaid Transformation Waiver application to the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

People who are chronically homeless or at-risk of chronic homelessness experience significant health disparities, including high rates of chronic and acute behavioral and physical illnesses, risk of injury, trauma, and exposure from living outside, and barriers to accessing uninterrupted, appropriate levels of health care. As a result, this population also has high costs to public systems, including Medicaid, due to frequent emergency department utilization, hospitalizations, and high utilization of other public crisis services.

All Home recently adopted a new strategic plan to guide our efforts to address and eliminate homelessness in King County. Our vision is that homelessness is rare in King County, racial disparities are eliminated, and if one becomes homeless, it is brief and only a one-time occurrence. One of the major principles guiding this plan is the need to prioritize those whose health and safety are most vulnerable. This benefit will help our community address the needs of this population and ensure there are services matched with housing resources that will support long-term stability.

One of the barriers to bringing supportive housing fully to scale in Washington is a shortage of funding for the housing services that are critical to the model's success. If approved, the Supportive Housing Medicaid benefit will bring additional resources for supportive housing services to Washington and will help make the expansion of this intervention financially feasible.

Thank you for your consideration of Washington's 1115 Medicaid Transformation Waiver application. We look forward to continuing to work with the Washington State Health Care Authority to implement the 1115 waiver and a supportive housing Medicaid benefit. If approved, this proposal will result in significant

savings to Medicaid while ensuring people with serious disabilities are able to live with security, autonomy and dignity in their own communities.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Putnam", is centered within a light gray rectangular box.

Mark Putnam, Director

All Home King County